



Start of Kurt Wolf Apton Collection

AR 11265

Sys #: 000199963

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

Center for Jewish History

15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

Phone: (212) 744-6400

Fax: (212) 988-1305

Email: lbaeck@lbi.cjh.org

URL: <http://www.lbi.org>

AR 11265

1/1

Kurt Wolf Apton Collection, 2001

AHC

204c

THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE
AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE: 15 WEST 16TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10011, TEL (212) 744 - 6400

Name: KURT WOLF APTOWITZER
First Name Middle Name Last Name

Occupation in US: ENG. SUPERVISOR

Date of Birth: 1 17 1920 Place of Birth: VIENNA, AUSTRIA
Month Day Year City Country

Prewar Address: 26 HASLINGER GASSE XVII BEZIRK, WIEN, ÖSTERREICH
Street (District, if in Vienna) City Country

Prewar Name: KURT W. APTOWITZER Maiden Name: _____

1. Education/Occupation(s) (please if possible, indicate institutions and year when entered/left)

REAL GYMNASIUM, GEWERBESCHULE, MASTERMECH. INSTRUCTOR
TOOL & DIE MACH. ELECTRICAL ENG.

2. Were you affiliated with any kind of organization (Youth, Zionist, Political, etc.)?

If so, did you have any specific function? SPORT BOXING, GOLDEN GLOVE 1937
FEDERATION, No 1.
CUAVURAH, LANDESDIENST.

3. Were you arrested and/or interned? (please indicate where and when)

WIEN 1938 JULY & AUGUST.

4. What was your route of emigration? (please indicate places and dates of stay)

FELD KIRCH TO SWITZERLAND, PARIS, ITALY,
BACK TO SWITZERLAND, ENGLAND AND ARRIVE IN NEW YORK

5. May we contact you again with a more detailed follow-up questionnaire?

(please circle)
☒ Yes / No

6. Do you have any documents, such as photographs, letters, diaries, all kinds of manuscripts, etc., that would be appropriate for the archives of the LBI?

☒ Yes / No

If necessary please use additional sheets. Thank you!

THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE
AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE: 15 WEST 16TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10011, TEL (212) 744 - 6400

We kindly ask you to answer the following questions in as much detail as possible, either in English or in German. If you need more space, please feel free to use additional sheets. If you don't know the answer to certain questions or don't want to answer for any reason, just go on to the next question.

NAME: KURT W. APTON (APTOWITZER) DATE: 10/12/01

1. BEFORE MARCH 1938

1.1 Please describe your parental home.

(Did you live in an apartment or in a house? How many people lived there with you? Did you have servants? What language(s) were spoken in the household?)

5⁺ PERSONS, MOTHER, FATHER, SISTER
AND 2 BROTHERS, WE HAD A
NANNY, FOR THE CHILDREN,
GERMAN WITH WIENER DIALECT.

1.2 Please tell us about your neighborhood (District in Vienna or area).

(What ethnic groups lived there? Religious life? Relationships between Jews and non-Jews? Relationships with neighbors?)

CATHOLICS, PROTESTANTS, AND JEWS.
OUR RELATIONSHIP WAS VERY
GOOD. SOME MINOR INCIDENTS
IN SCHOOL WITH OTHER STUDENTS,
ANTISEMITIC INFLUENCED.

1.6 Did you or your family encounter any anti-Semitism in Austria before March 1938?

(If so, please give details.)

JUST THE NORMAL KIND,
ENVY, AND NAME CALLING,
MY FATHER MAY BE REST IN
PEACE, BELIEVED, WHEN YOU ARE
PICKED ON, BETTER YOURSELF.
AND BE INTELLIGENT,
RESPECT OTHERS, AND YOU BE
RESPECTED.

1.7 What was your/ your family's reaction to Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933 and to Nazi activity in Austria in the early thirties? Did you/ they feel threatened by these events?

IN ALL HONESTY, WE ARE
WIENER, IT WONT HAPPEN
HERE. HOW WRONG WE WERE.

MY FATHER DID BUSINESS
WITH GERMANY AND WAS
NOT THREATENED.

MIS COMPANY WAS WELL
LIKED.

- 2.3 Could you please describe your recollections of November 9th, 1938, the so-called „Reichs-Kristallnacht“ (in case you still were in Austria at that time)

I WONT TALK
ABOUT IT.

- 2.4 Were you or any members of your family arrested? Sent to a camp?
(If so, please give details.)

BOTH GRANDMA'S SEND
TO THERESIENSTADT AND DIED
THER.

PNCLES, ANT'S WITH CHILDREN
AND BABY'S ENDED UP IN
KONZENTRATION CAMP AND NEVER CAME BACK.

- 2.5 Can you recall the process of obtaining papers necessary for emigration?
(Did you try to obtain visas for other countries as well? Were you supported by any relief organization, by relatives or friends?)

I HAD NO PAPERS AND
ENTERED SWITZERLAND
ILLEGALLY.

3. THE UNITED STATES

3.1 When did you arrive in the U.S.? (Please indicate exact date, if possible)

AUGUST 1948

3.2 Did members of your family emigrate to countries other than the U.S.?
(If so, where? Where do they live today? Are you still in contact with them?)

FAMILY MEMBERS TO
ENGLAND, AUSTRALIA.

3.3 Did you serve in the U.S. Armed Forces or in any other allied army?
(If so, when did you join? What division? What was your area of operation?
When were you discharged?)

X

3.7 Do you still speak German in the USA? If so, with whom and when? How often?

ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.
AND FOR SOME TRANSLATION.

3.8 Would you call yourself religious? To what degree? What is your affiliation? Did it change?

(Do you keep kosher, go to synagogue, observe the holidays,...?)

JEWISH TRADITIONAL,
OBSERVE HOLY DAYS AND
GO TO THE SYNAGOGUE.

3.9 Were your friends and acquaintances mostly ~~German-speaking~~ or non-German-speaking? Mainly Jewish or not?

DID NOT MAKE ANY
DIFFERENCE.

3.10 Of what country (countries) are you a citizen? When was each citizenship granted?

NATURALIZED AMERICAN
1952

5. FAMILY MEMBERS

5.1 **Spouse** (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

5.2 **Mother** (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

HEDWIG SPITZ
~~VIENNA~~ HAUSERAY DIED 1956

5.3 **Father** (Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

JES APTOWITZER, DIED
1982. COMPUTER ANALYST.

5.4 **Siblings** (Name, Maiden Name, Place/date of birth [if deceased, place/date of death], Occupation[s])

SISTER IN ENGLAND
JOINT BRITISH AIR FORCE.
STILL LIVING IN ENGLAND,
BROTHER LIVING IN FLORIDA.



N. S. B. O.
Heimats

(Bezirksbetriebszellenleitung)

Wien, am 24. März 1938

An die Firma
Alfred Lichtenstein,
Glühlampen.
W i e n III.,
Eslarngasse 10
=====

Zu Händen des kommissarischen Leiters.

Herr Schaje A p t o w i t z e r , Wien XVII., Haslingergasse 1
ist, wie aus seinen vorgelegten Dokumenten hervorgeht, Kriegersteil
und Kriegerverletzter. Aus diesem Grunde möge er bei obiger Firma
Unterstützung finden.

Heil Hitler !

Der Bezirksobmann
der N S B O XVII.,

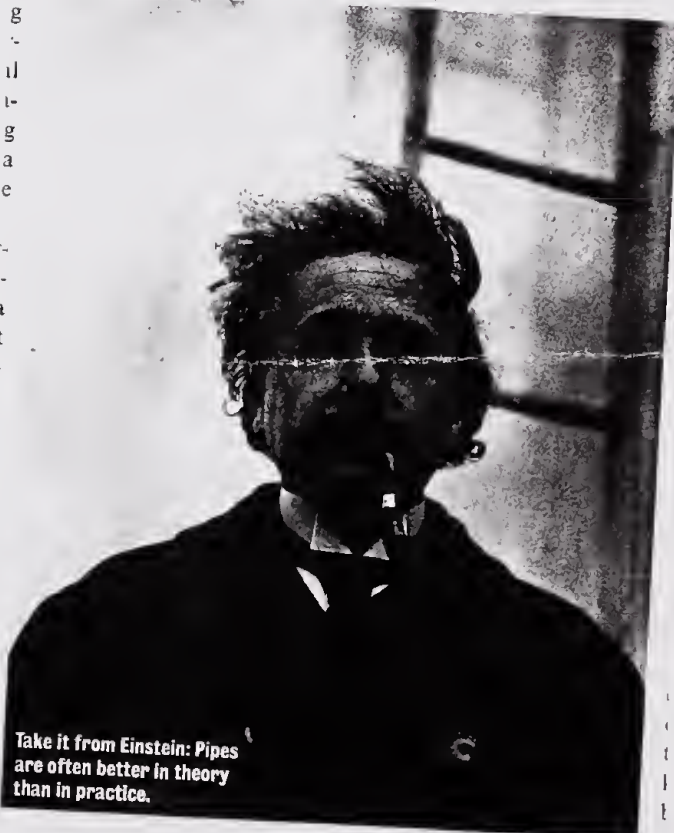
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Miss Else MOOS, daughter of a first
cousin of mine, is known to me as an reliable
and diligent person. She has had training and
experience as a seamstress and I should be glad
if she could find suitable work.

Princeton N.J.
December 9th, 1939

A. Einstein
Professor Albert Einstein.



Take it from Einstein: Pipes
are often better in theory
than in practice.

AM I GUILTY

MY STORY BEGINS IN VIENNA WHERE I WAS BORN

AN. 2 120

~~AT~~ THERE WAS ALWAYS FRICTION WITH MY CLASSMATES, AND JEW HATRED WAS ACCEPTED AS A WAY OF LIFE. MY SCHOOL YEARS WERE ALLRIGHT. I BLENDED IN; EVEN THOUGH I WAS RAISED IN A STRICTLY JEWISH TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE.....

ONE EVENING, ON A FRIDAY NIGHT, WHEN WE USUALLY ATE THE SABBOTH MEAL AT MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE WITH ALL OF THE FAMILY AND RELATIVES, WHERE WE HAD LOTS OF FUN AND YIDDISHKEIT; I WAS LATE, BECAUSE JEW HATERS BEAT THE HELL OUT OF ME, JUST FOR FUN.

WHEN I DID ARRIVE, THE FAMILY WAS DEVASTATED TO SEE ME IN THAT CONDITION.

MY FATHER TOOK ME TO THE POLICE STATION TO MAKE A REPORT AND COMPLAINT. EVEN THOUGH I KNEW THERE NAMES I KEPT IT SECRET. WHY?

TIME ADVANCED WITH HITLER'S STORM TROOPERS MARCHING INTO VIENNA. IN 1938 I WAS PICKED UP AND MADE TO WORK TO THE AMUSEMENT OF THE GENTILES IN A FACTORY YARD.

JUST THEN SOME SA TROOPER GRABBED ME AND DRAGGED ME TO A BUS. WITH ONE FOOT ALREADY IN THE BUS* OUT OF NOWHERE, ONE OF THE BOYS WHO BEAT ME UP, ALSO IN UNIFORM, ASKED, "WHATS GOING ON?"

HE TOOK ME HOME TO MY FAMILY AND TOLD MY FATHER TO LET ME GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY. SO I DID WITH MY SISTER AND TWO COUSINS. WE CROSSED THE BORDER INTO SWITZERLAND.

OUR LIVES WERE SAVED.

YES ,I AM GUILTY...BY NOT DIVULGING THE JEW HATER'S NAMES.

* I WAS DELIVERING JEWS TO THE RAILROAD STATION.

- I WAS TAKEN TO THE KONZENTRATION CAMP.



End of Kurt Wolf Apton Collection